

# Report to Cabinet Petitions Committee

**16 February 2022**

<b>Subject:</b>	Petitions Progress Report
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Matt Powis Matt_Powis@sandwell.gov.uk

## 1 Recommendations

That the Cabinet Petitions Committee approve the action taken or proposed as details in the third column below.

## 2 Reasons for Recommendations

To receive petitions and approve action taken/proposed in response.

## 3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

		Petitions are one of the many ways in which people who live and work in the Borough can influence the decision-making process. Many of the issues typically raised by petitions underpin the Council's Vision. Petitions alert members and officers to current local issues and ensure that services are being targeted appropriately in delivering the Council's priorities.
		
		



## 4 Context and Key Issues

Section 46 of the Localism Act 2011 removes the requirements for principal local authorities in England and Wales to make, publish and comply with a scheme for the handling of petitions made to the authority, with effect from 1 April 2012. At its meeting on 22 May 2012, the Council decided to retain a petitions scheme, although there was no longer a statutory requirement to have such a scheme.

## 5 Background Details

### 5.1 Petitions received since last reporting period

Signatories	Subject	Action Taken/Proposed	
5.1.1	24 - Middlemore Road – Parked cars obstructing the footpath, yellow lines being ignored by motorists	New Petition	
5.1.2	48 - Bilston Rd (Princes End)	Average Speed Cameras Installation requested from the residents of Bilston Rd due to speeding.	Officers will prepare a full response to Petitions Committee following speed surveys to identify the extent and distribution of the problem to assist the Police with enforcement.
5.1.3	135 – Residents of Tividale	No - to the proposed One-Way System for Hawfield Road.	
5.1.4	12 – Residents of Sandwell	National Landlord Register - Asking the Council Leader to show support by writing to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up and Housing, Michael	Under consideration by cabinet.



		Gove implement the register as part of their upcoming Renters' Reform Bill	
5.1.5	92 – Various local residents (Friar Park)	Request for the installation of a crossing on Oxford Street near No.93	Officers have reported that a number of attempts have been made to appoint a new School Crossing Patrol at Oxford Street in the vicinity of Mesty Croft School, however, so far there hasn't been any applicants. Arrangements will be made for pedestrian counts and traffic surveys to be undertaken to check if the location meets the national criteria for the implementation of a formal crossing facility. If this location meets the national criteria, then funding will need to be identified for the implementation of a crossing facility.

## 5.2 Progress on outstanding petitions

Signatories	Subject	Action Taken/Proposed
5.2.1 128 – Residents of Lightwoods Hill, Smethwick (Abbey)	Request for traffic calming measures	Following representations from the head petitioner at the previous meeting, the Committee requested that Highways undertake a traffic survey. A proposal to implement a traffic calming scheme along Lightwoods Hill was to be made. A Road Safety Improvement Scheme has been designed for Lightwoods Hill and a consultation is underway with local residents. Letters have been sent out to local residents



for comments on Thursday 11th November 2021. An update will be provided to a future meeting of the Cabinet Petitions Committee.

Officers confirmed that the consultation has been undertaken with local residents regarding the implementation of a road safety scheme along Lightwoods Hill. A number of objections have been raised regarding the proposed scheme, which is now currently being reviewed. Suggestions and comments from the consultation process are being considered to see if any adjustments can be made to the scheme proposal within the available budget.

5.2.2 26 - Residents of Church Road (Soho and Victoria) Request for permit holder parking on Church Road

Officers have confirmed that the grass verge along Church Road is Council owned and maintained by housing management. The grass verge opposite property numbers 51-63 accommodates three utility boxes and also has apparatus present underneath the verge. The utility boxes and apparatus would have to be moved by the utility company which would incur substantial costs to the Council. In addition, alternative locations suitable to accommodate the utility boxes would need to be identified. There are also level differences between the grass verge and



the footpath that would need to be addressed before parking bays could be constructed. This would require retaining walls to support the land which would incur further substantial costs. The grass verge opposite property numbers 1-49 also accommodated a utility box that would need to be removed and relocated. This section was also lined with mature trees, 6 of which would need to be removed before parking bays could be constructed. The removal of trees and green spaces was usually met with objection, although if this was agreed, they would need to be replaced with 12 new trees in the local vicinity in accordance with Council policy. Approximately 40 additional parking spaces could be achieved at this location, although the costs to undertake the work will be substantial as outlined above. It was estimated the work would be in excess of £230,000 for which housing would need to identify a budget. At a previous meeting, officers confirmed the implementation of 40 parking spaces would result in a number of healthy trees being removed which would not support the council's commitment to protect and expand the borough's trees and green spaces. Housing do not



have available funding for the implementation of additional parking bays as alleviating parking issues is not one of the priorities set for estate and housing improvements. At the last petitions meeting, the Committee requested for Highways officers to investigate whether the grass verge could be converted to accommodate a maximum of 7 parking spaces, as opposed to 40. It was confirmed that a reduced number of parking bays could be accommodated within the grassed verge along Church Road, the parking bays cost approximately £3,000 to construct and there is likely to be additional costs for utility diversions as there are some utility apparatus present in the verge area. These costs will need to be obtained from the relevant utility companies. The grassed verge area is housing maintained and funding would therefore need to be identified by them. An update will be provided to a future meeting of the Cabinet Petitions Committee.

(Received 10/06/21)

5.2.3 63 – Residents of West Park Road (St Paul’s)

Concerns regarding the new entrance and exit for West Smethwick Park

Officers confirmed that a significant consultation had been undertaken prior to the project commencing. Furthermore, while officers from Highways were consulted and



no concerns were raised, discussions are now in place to address the concerns highlighted by the residents. Officers continue to work alongside partners in the local community to address the issues raised. The issues highlighted were addressed as part of the local town forum in order to identify what measures can be adopted to mitigate any concerns. All existing entrances into the Park would be improved as part of the restoration project, with an exception of the existing car park entrance which was proposed to be relocated. Properties on West Park Road received letters notifying residents of the Planning Application on the 10th April 2017. New litter bins would be installed as part of the restoration project and Officers continue to deal with any flytipping and littering as it arises. Officers intend to commence work on the new entrance way with immediate effect. Assessments on impact of traffic calming from other roads will be undertaken as soon as the work has been completed. An update will be provided to a future meeting of the Cabinet Petitions Committee. (Received 29/04/2021)

5.2.4 413 – various road users/ residents

Request for traffic light system at the junction of Park Lane/Manor

The funding for road safety schemes such as traffic signals is prioritised where injury



(Wednesbury North)

House Road and Hobs Road/ Hawthorn Road, Wednesbury

accidents are occurring. A five-year injury accident analysis shows there have been 3 recorded injury accidents during this period. This is low when compared to other locations that are being considered for major traffic calming schemes. Although this junction does not meet the criteria for the installation of traffic signals a road safety scheme to implement additional carriageway markings and vehicle activated speed signs either side of the junction will be undertaken. This will help to warn drivers and reduce vehicle speeds on the approach to the junction. The Committee requested the junction be monitored to ensure that the traffic calming measures made a difference. Arrangements have been made for a further traffic survey to be undertaken along Park Lane. The data will then be compared to the traffic survey which was undertaken prior to the installation of the vehicle activated speed sign. A seven day traffic survey had been undertaken around the junction of Park Lane / Manor House Road. It shows that 85% of motorists are travelling at 29.7mph or less (figure includes both directions). Officers reported that Council Policy required funding for road safety improvements to be prioritised in areas where treatable injury



collisions are occurring. The funding for road safety improvements such as traffic signals must be prioritised in areas where treatable injury collisions are occurring. The junction of Park Lane and Manor House Road does not currently meet the criteria for a road safety improvement scheme, this is because there are other areas in Sandwell with higher numbers of injury collisions which must be prioritised first in accordance with Sandwell's Strategic Road Safety Plan.

Following representations from a ward councillor on behalf of the head petitioner, the Committee decided that a visit with the Cabinet Member and officers would take place to determine if any low-cost alternatives could be identified. These might be afforded from local community budgets. An update would be provided to a future meeting of the Cabinet Petitions Committee.

Officers confirmed that a meeting with local ward members, Cabinet Member for Highways and Highways officers has been scheduled for 14th February at 3pm.



## 5.3 Petitions requiring final approval

Signatories	Subject	Action Taken/Proposed
5.3.1 19 – Residents near Price Road Junction (Friar Park)	Request for traffic calming measures on William Green Road	<p>Following representations made at the previous meeting, the Committee requested for officers to investigate the possibility of implementing traffic calming measures. Officers have confirmed that a five-year injury collision analysis has been undertaken for William Green Road and it shows there hasn't been any recorded injury collisions during this period. Officers reported that Council Policy required funding for road safety improvements to be targeted in areas where treatable injury collisions are occurring in accordance with Sandwell's Strategic Road Safety Plan. William Green Road would not be considered for a road safety scheme at this time because there are other roads in Sandwell with higher numbers of treatable injury collisions which must be prioritised first.</p> <p>Following representation from the head petitioner it was proposed that a focused traffic calming measure near the junction be looked into and costed with the possibility of drawing on funding from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The proposal would be communicated to Ward Members and the head of Highways. Further investigation</p>



would be taken, and a further report would be submitted to the Cabinet Petitions Committee at a future date

Officers confirmed that the cost to install a vertical traffic calming measure along William Green Road, near to Price Road, would be estimated at £5,000each. This would be in the form of a ramp which extends across the width of the carriageway. The estimated figure includes traffic management which would be required whilst work is undertaken.

5.3.2 79 – residents of Queens Road, Smethwick (Smethwick)

Concern regarding speeding and traffic accidents on Queens Road, Smethwick.

A seven-day traffic survey has been undertaken for Queens Road between Basons Lane and the traffic island at the junction with Warley Road. It shows that 85% of vehicles are travelling at 32.8mph or less (includes both directions). A three-year injury collision analysis has also been undertaken and it shows there has been 1 recorded injury collision. When Queens Road is compared to other roads in Sandwell it has a very low number of injury collisions and does not therefore meet the criteria for the implementation of a traffic calming scheme. Although the vehicle speeds are slightly higher than the 30mph speed limit, this is still within the parameters of 35mph set by the



Police for enforcement purposes. However, a carriageway lining scheme was implemented in October last year in response to enquiries received from A further 3-year injury collision analysis has been undertaken for Queens Road and it shows there has been two recorded injury collisions during this period. This is very low when compared to some other areas in Sandwell where funding must be prioritised to reduce the injury collisions in accordance with Sandwell's Strategic Road Safety Plan.

At the previous meeting, the Committee requested that officers investigated whether the road could become a designated 20mph area and to also look into the costs/funding options. A further seven day traffic survey has been undertaken along Queens Road during the summer months as requested by residents. The traffic survey was completed during August 2021.

It shows there is a daily average of 6,216 vehicles travelling along Queens Road in both directions. 85% of these motorists are travelling at 34.3mph or less. Although a slight increase in speed is shown when it is compared to the traffic survey undertaken



during the winter, it does not meet the criteria for Police enforcement intervention which is 35mph. In accordance with Policy the funding for traffic calming measures was targeted in areas where treatable injury collisions are occurring and Queens Road did not meet this criteria set out in Sandwell's Strategic Road Safety Plan. This is because there are other areas in Sandwell with higher numbers of treatable injury collisions that must be prioritised. Consideration has been given to a 20mph zone along Queens Road and although this could be implemented by the council, it would still require enforcement by the Police. This is because the Police are the only authority who hold the powers to enforce the speed limit. They are actively undertaking speed watch initiatives in local communities. This is part of the #SlowDownSaveLives campaign and residents should be encouraged to report problems online at : [www.west-midlands.police.uk/your-options/speeding](http://www.west-midlands.police.uk/your-options/speeding). Following further representation from the head petitioner the Committee requested that officers had a dialogue with the Commonwealth Games Team and identify what traffic



management measures were going to be put in place during the Games, and what consideration had been given to post-games traffic impact and investment into the local infrastructure. Further consideration would be given to a 20mph zone around the aquatics centre. An update would be provided to a future meeting of the Cabinet Petitions Committee.

Officers confirmed that a Transport Assessment had been provided as part of the Planning Application Process for the Commonwealth Games. This Transport Assessment was carried out by an independent company and was used by the Commonwealth Games Organising Committee, who produced a Local Area Traffic Management Plan in preparation for the Commonwealth Games. Consideration was given to the area where spectators will be entering and leaving the Aquatics Centre off Manor Road, and also where competitors will be entering the site from Londonderry Lane through controlled movement zones.

Queens Road was not identified for improvement work through this Transport Assessment.



However, there has been £1,000,000 worth of highway funding for new infrastructure implemented around this area to improve walking and cycling routes for highway users. This has included 3 new pedestrian crossing facilities and 3 new sets of traffic signals and improvements at the junction of Queens Road and Londonderry Lane.

5.3.3 33 – residents of View Point, Tividale (Tividale)

Request for installation of night and day gates in the gully located at View Point.

Greenbelt Group wish to assist in reducing anti-social behaviour and would not oppose the installation of gates in principle, if this represented the wishes of the 299 households which are currently billed in respect of the areas. However, Greenbelt Group have specified that the Council would need to be responsible for the maintenance thereafter, agree to indemnify Greenbelt Group in respect of the gates (e.g. to cover any injury) and agree to fund the removal of the gates, if and when required. The head petitioner has advised that residents are not prepared to contribute. As the land is not in Council ownership the Council cannot take on the liability or maintenance of the gates. No further action is proposed by the Council.

Following representations, further investigation would be taken and a further report would



be submitted to the Cabinet Petitions Committee at a future date.

Green Belt have consulted residents that they can install a gate but they will look to share the £8k costs between the residents on the estate. Residents have opposed this.

**6 Source Documents**

Copies of petitions from various groups of residents (exempt information).



